

**COUNTY LEGISLATURE  
JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI**

**OFFICE OF WILLIAM H. PETRIE**  
LEGISLATOR, SECOND DISTRICT AT LARGE

JACKSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
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April 18, 2002

The Hon. Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 – 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20544

Dear Mr. Powell:

I am writing you in support of the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications Corp. (the Dish Network) and Hughes Electronics Corp. (DirecTV), which is pending before the Department of Justice and the FCC (Docket # 01-348).

This merger is good for the Direct Satellite Broadcast industry, its current customers and, best of all, its potential customers – such as the rural residents who have no access to pay TV or high-speed Internet access because the cable monopolies, with their government franchises, don't want to string expensive cable across the countryside.

The merged EchoStar will be able to serve all 210 markets in the United States, rather than the 40 or so markets the two satellite companies now serve, with greatly expanded high-definition television programming, pay-per-view, educational, specialty and foreign-language programming, and all the other possibilities this technology permits.

This merger provides, in effect, a virtual "third line" into the home for a bundle of video/data/Internet services. That is to say, it provides meaningful competition with the telephone and cable TV companies.

Frankly, I find it difficult to see a downside to the EchoStar/DirecTV merger. Let's allow American satellite technology to benefit all Americans.

Sincerely,

William H. Petrie